COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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December 9, 1992

Mr. John Mouring
FPDO Master Planning
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Langley Research Center
Hampton, VA 23665-5225

Re: Proposed OSD Industrial Complex, Langley Research Center
City of Hampton
VDHR File No. 91-1350-F

Dear Mr. Mouring:

Both Tony and I appreciated the opportunity to meet with you on Monday to discuss the issues regarding site 44HT43 and the proposed OSD Industrial Complex. As was stated in the meeting, we feel that the excavation of as many as 28 large test units in the parking lot area ("partial Phase II") would not accomplish the evaluation needs of the undertaking and approaches archaeological data recovery, a treatment measure that may not be necessary. As an alternative, we are providing the following outline for a conventional evaluation of the entire resource that will establish the National Register eligibility of 44HT43, provide comprehensive boundaries for that resource, and provide a representative view of its internal character. The outline can be considered a list of tasks that could be modified for your consultant's use if you are able to execute a change order or if you decide to resolicit proposals.

1. **Historic Context Development** - A resource-specific historic context needs to be developed for 44HT43 to establish the basis on which the archaeological remains can be evaluated. An historic context is a simple concept - historic theme, time, and space - and its development does not require preparation of a lengthy historic narrative. Instead, resource-specific documentary sources need to be sufficiently examined to establish a basis of information against which the significance of the archaeological data can be judged.

2. **Archaeological Investigation** - The archaeological examination of 44HT43 should be limited to the level of effort necessary to establish its National Register eligibility and to aid in the assessment of effect for the Section 106 process. The investigation can be subdivided into a number of specific tasks as follows:

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A. Close-Interval Shovel Testing - During the Phase I investigation, shovel test units were excavated largely at 60 foot intervals. For the evaluation (Phase II), that interval needs to be reduced to 30 feet throughout the site area to provide additional "resolution" of artifact distribution and more detailed boundaries. We estimate that approximately 60 shovel test units will need to be excavated in addition to those implemented at the Phase I level. The Phase I grid should be reestablished and the additional shovel tests excavated to ensure that the entire resource is covered with "sample points" at 30 foot intervals. It would be appropriate to extend the shovel test grid south on either side of the BART facility to determine the site boundaries in that area where a future addition to that building is planned.

B. Analysis of Shovel Test Data - Once the shovel testing has been completed, the information obtained needs to be analyzed to determine the appropriate placement and number of larger test units. The most effective way to do this is to plot the varying distribution of artifact classes as contours similar to those on a topographic map. This can be done by hand, though it is faster to utilize such PC-based software as "Surfer" or an equivalent mapping product. At a minimum, maps illustrating the distribution of (1) all artifacts, and (2) architectural debris should be prepared. Other maps illustrating the distribution of other discrete artifact classes also could be generated if appropriate for the purposes of refining the field investigation or accomplishing the overall goal of resource evaluation.

C. Limited Excavation of Larger Test Units - A limited number of larger test units need to be excavated in areas of high archaeological potential as determined by the shovel test distribution maps (Item B, above). The use of distribution maps can allow the precise placement of test units in areas where architectural debris or other remains are concentrated. The location and quantity of larger test units, either 3-foot or 5-foot squares, only can be determined after the distribution maps are generated. The number of units should be kept to the minimum number necessary to assess site integrity and to determine the presence or absence of features in high potential areas. We do not anticipate that 28 5-foot squares will be necessary for this project and it is likely that significantly fewer will be needed to achieve the objective of resource evaluation. We would be happy to provide assistance in the selection of test unit locations once the distribution maps have been generated.

D. Laboratory Processing - Once the field investigation has been completed, all artifacts need to be cleaned, identified, and curated in a manner that will ensure the long-term preservation and usefulness of the assemblage. Our agency's curator, Lizbeth Acuff, can provide additional information concerning appropriate standards.

3. Evaluation - Once the field investigation is completed and recovered information analyzed, the consultant needs to integrate historical documentation and archaeological data to determine the National Register eligibility of 44HT43. The evaluation should examine recovered

information in relation to the defined historic context and evaluate the resource against National Register criteria.

4. **Report Preparation** - The report describing the findings of the evaluation needs to satisfy the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Archaeology and Historic Preservation (48 FR 44716 - 44742) and our agency's recently revised Guidelines for Preparing Identification and Evaluation Reports (June 1992). A copy of the latter document is enclosed for your use.

5. **Assessment of Effect** - You may wish to limit the consultant's work plan to determination of National Register eligibility for site 44HT43. We are prepared to provide assistance directly to NASA in assessing the effect of the undertaking and in the determination of appropriate treatment measures should 44HT43 be considered eligible for register listing (an "historic property"). We recommend that you examine the possibility of "burying" 44HT43 underneath the parking lot and under the Mechanical Building as a potential treatment measure to be implemented if necessary. Substantial information exists regarding site "burial" and we would be happy to share it to help determine whether that treatment constitutes a feasible option for your OSD project.

We hope the recommendations outlined above prove useful to NASA in implementing the evaluation of 44HT43 necessary for the Section 106 process. If we can be of further assistance, please feel free to contact me or Tony Opperman.

Sincerely,

Bruce J. Larson
Project Review Section Supervisor

NASA
Langley Research Center Hampton, VA 23665-5225

FPDO Master Planning
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Facsimile Transmission Lead Sheet

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Frank –

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Pls comment

Thx

JM